

2025/2026 WOMEN4CLIMATE TO MENTORSHIP PROGRAM AND PITCH CONTEST

OFFICIAL COMPETITION RULES

Applying to the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program and Pitch Contest (the "Competition") constitutes your acceptance of the Official Competition Rules (the "Rules") outlined herein.

Background

Toronto's population is made up of diverse communities and groups. The City of Toronto values the contributions made by all residents and is committed to its motto "Diversity Our Strength".

The City of Toronto recognizes the barriers presented by discrimination and the disadvantages faced by equity-deserving groups and vulnerable populations. In particular, the City recognizes the unique status and cultural diversity of Indigenous communities and their right to self-determination.

Women4ClimateTO acknowledges the importance of intersectionality and encourages applications from women-identifying, trans, and two-spirited applicants of diverse cultures, races, religions and abilities.

1. ORGANIZER AND SPONSOR

- **Organizer:** The Competition is organized by the City of Toronto, 100 Queen Street West, Toronto, ON M5H 2N2 (the "Organizer").
- **Sponsor:** The sponsor for the Competition is to be announced at a later time.

2. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

The Competition is open to women-identifying, trans, or two-spirited individuals who have submitted completed application and who meet all of the following criteria at the time of applying:

- at least 18 years old;
- reside, work, or attend a secondary school, college or university in Toronto or the Greater Toronto Area which includes the following municipalities:
 - Peel Region (Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon)
 - York Region (Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, King, Newmarket, East Gwillimbury, Georgina)
 - Durham Region (Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa, Clarington, Uxbridge, Scugog, Brock)
 - Halton Region (Oakville, Burlington, Milton, Halton Hills);
- have an established climate-focused project, product, or start-up business, with complete intellectual property rights for the project, product, or start-up business;
- have signing authority and can bind the corporation, if applicable.

For individuals who apply to the Competition (the “Entrants”), the jury panel will be looking for evidence of their ongoing commitment to climate action in cities and innovative projects. Entrants' projects should involve the residents and communities of Toronto wherever possible. The goals of the project can be global, but they should relate to climate action at the local level. The project must align with the City of Toronto's [TransformTO](#) and/or [Resilience Strategy](#). The jury panel will consider applications for project ideas related to one or more of the following climate priorities:

- Renewable Energy
- Sustainable Buildings
- Sustainable Transport
- Air Quality
- Circular Economy
- Biodiversity
- Sustainable Waste Management

Entrants:

Interested persons must apply as an individual. We acknowledge that there may be group projects; however, upon applying to the program, one individual must be appointed as representative by the group. Should the group project be selected to participate in the Competition, their appointed representative will act as the Mentee and should the group project be awarded a Prize, their appointed representative will be the recipient of the Prize. Once a group representative has been appointed, no

changes can be made. The appointed representative must have signing authority and complete intellectual property rights.

The following individuals are not eligible to enter the Competition:

- City of Toronto employees, its members of council and members of their immediate families (spouse, parent, sibling or child) as well as those living in the same household;
- City of Toronto agency and corporation employees, their board members and members of their immediate families (spouse, parent, sibling or child) as well as those living in the same household;
- members of the jury panels (who are involved in the Mentee selection process and the pitch competition adjudication process) and members of their immediate families (spouse, parent, sibling or child) as well as those living in the same household;
- Mentees of the 2024/2025 Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program cohort;
- a bidder, proponent or applicant, or their representative, who is party to a concurrent City of Toronto procurement solicitation and award process; and/or
- a bidder, proponent or applicant, or their representative, who is party to a concurrent City of Toronto planning application or approval process.

An "Entrant" acknowledges compliance with, and agree to be bound by these Competition Rules including, but not limited to the eligibility requirements set out above. Entrants who do not comply with any of the Competition Rules are subject to disqualification by the Organizer, at the Organizer's sole discretion.

3. COMPETITION DATES AND TIMES:

Applications:

The Competition starts on October 29, 2025, at 9:00 am EDT, at which point applications may be made to the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program. Applications will be accepted until November 20, 2025, at 11:59.59 pm EDT after which time no further applications will be accepted. The sole determinant of time for the making of an application is the City of Toronto records for the application information.

Selection of Mentees:

All completed (valid and verified) applications will be reviewed by a jury panel. The

Competition judging period for selecting 10 to 12 Mentees will commence on or about November 21, 2025, 9:00 a.m. EDT, and will conclude on or about December 17, 2025 11:59:59 p.m. EDT.

All Entrants will be notified of their status by email, no later than December 1, 2025. The top 15 to 20 shortlisted Entrants will be asked to participate in a virtual panel interview and are expected to make themselves available during December 5-10, 2025 (exact date and time to be determined).

Following the interview process, the selected 10 to 12 Mentees will be notified by means of the e-mail address provided on their applications on or around December 19, 2025, at approximately 12:00 pm EST. The Mentees must respond by e-mail, confirm their eligibility, and complete all required documentation within three business days of notification. If a Mentee does not respond in accordance with these Competition Rules, they will be disqualified, and the Entrant who was selected as having the next best application by the jury panel will become a Mentee. The Organizer is not responsible for the failure for any reason whatsoever of a Mentee to receive notification or for the Organizer to receive a Mentee's response.

The official activities of the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program will begin during the week of January 19, 2026.

Mentees will be expected to attend an in-person orientation session and Climate Knowledge Lab workshop in Toronto during the week of January 19-23, 2026 (exact date to be determined).

Mentorship Program Activities and Honoraria:

Mentees will participate in six months of activities from January 2026 to July 2026 which include:

- Meetings with three assigned mentors for two 45-minute mentorship sessions each
- Participate in four mentorship knowledge labs on the following topics: Overview of TransformTO Climate Action Strategy, business and financial planning, marketing and communication techniques and pitch preparation.

4. HOW TO APPLY:

Entrants must apply online by visiting the Competition website at

[Toronto.ca/women4Climate](https://toronto.ca/women4Climate) and following the links and instructions to make an application. For purposes of this Competition, receipt of an application occurs when City of Toronto receives the application. Entrants may only submit one application per project and only the first application will be valid. Each application will be registered and time coded.

Any attempt or suspected attempt to use robotic, automatic, programmed, or other illicit means to make an application, or any other methods not authorized by these Competition Rules, for example but not limited to, creating multiple accounts, identities, or registrations shall be deemed, all in the Organizer's sole discretion, as tampering and may disqualify the individual contain false or incomplete information may be void. Applications that do not conform with or satisfy any or all of the conditions of the Competition Rules may be deemed void. All applications become the property of the Organizer upon receipt. Women4ClimateTO will not be communicating with applicants except to notify them of the status of their applications and will be contacting applicant using the contact information provided on the application.

5. PITCH COMPETITION AND PRIZES:

A Pitch Contest will be judged by a jury panel. Competition Prizes (the "Prizes") will be awarded to a total of four of the Mentees, which include (2) two runners-up, (1) one "Jury's Choice" and (1) one winner of the Pitch Contest (the "Runners-up", "Jury's Choice" and "Winner") and will consist of the following:

Each Runner-Up will receive a total Prize of \$5,000 each, in accordance with the following:

- \$3,000 within 90 days after the award is made; and
- \$2,000 on submission of a short survey report with respect to the progress of the project by the Runner-up to the Organizer on October 1, 2026.

Jury's Choice Award

The *Jury's Choice Award* shall be determined at the sole discretion of the jury panel to one (1) Mentee, in the opinion of the jury, demonstrates exceptional merit in areas not otherwise encompassed within the primary evaluation criteria. Such areas may include, without limitation, demonstrated community impact, notable development or growth over the course of the program, creativity, perseverance, or other distinguishing qualities deemed deserving of recognition by the jury panel.

Jury's Choice will receive a total Prize of \$5,000, in accordance with the following:

- \$3,000 within 90 days after the award is made; and
- \$2,000 on submission of a short survey report with respect to the progress of the project by the Runner-up to the Organizer on October 1, 2026.

The Winner will receive a total Prize of \$15,000, in accordance with the following:

- \$10,000 within 90 days after the award is made; and
- \$5,000 on submission of a short survey report with respect to the progress of the project by the Runner-up to the Organizer on October 1, 2026.

Prizes will be mailed to the address on file for the Runner-up, Jury's Choice or Winner or alternate arrangements may be made. Payment does not constitute an employer/employee relationship between the City and the award recipient. The recipient agrees that this is a one-time award and is not tied to the City of Toronto's recruitment selection process for employment.

Prize Eligibility

- The Mentees must attend at least 80 per cent of the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program activities to be eligible for the Prizes and must complete session evaluation forms following each activity.
- Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program activities and the Pitch contest may be held virtually or in-person. Mentees will be notified if Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program activities and/or the Pitch Contest are to be held in-person and/or virtually in advance.

Pitch competition Eligibility

- Mentees must complete an online written submission. Questions will be provided two – to three weeks in advance of the pitch competition.
- The written submission will be reviewed by the jury panel in advance of the Pitch Contest and will be considered along with the mentee's pitch as part of the overall evaluation of their project.
- Prior to the Pitch Contest, Mentees must register for a time slot to deliver their pitch. If accommodation is required, advance notice must be provided at least 15 business days in advance by emailing women4climateTO@toronto.ca.

- Pitches may be conducted in-person or virtually over the Teams platform. Only visual aids that can be viewed equally as well over the Teams platform and during an in-person presentation, may be used.
- Pitches will be five minutes in length and there will be up to eight minutes allotted for a question-and-answer period with the jury panel, for a total allotted time of thirteen minutes.
- Mentees may pitch only one idea or concept which must be the original work of the individual and must be the concept initially accepted into the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program.
- Pitch ideas or concepts deemed by the jury panel to be deceptive, insincere, unethical, immoral, or offensive may be disqualified from the Competition.
- Mentees are reminded that by entering and participating in this Competition they have licensed, for the purposes of the Competition only, intellectual property rights in any application or pitch to the Sponsor, including, but not limited to, copyright and all economic rights, and have waived their moral rights with respect of the use of the license, with no compensation or further consent required. More generally, confidentiality is not guaranteed in any way and any material that the mentee does not wish to be disclosed to other competitors, audience members, judges or anyone else should not be included in their submission or their pitch.

6. ODDS OF WINNING:

The odds of winning depend on the number of applications, the quality of the applications and quality of the Mentee pitches.

7. COMMUNICATION WITH THE RUNNERS-UP, JUDGE'S CHOICE AND WINNER:

The Runners-up, Jury's Choice and Winner will be notified after the Contest. The Runners-up, Judge's Choice and Winner must complete and return by e-mail, the "Prize winners declaration" form, and all other required documentation within 5 business days. If a Runner-up, Jury's Choice or Winner does not return the required documentation in accordance with these Competition Rules, they will be disqualified, will not receive their Prize, and the Prizes will be awarded according to the rankings of the remaining Mentees. For example, if the Winner is disqualified, then the second-ranked Mentee will become the Winner, the third-ranked Mentee will become the first Runner-up and the fourth-ranked Mentee will come the second Runner-up. The Organizer is not responsible for the failure for any reason whatsoever of a Runner-up, Jury's Choice or Winner to receive notification or for the

Organizer to receive a Runner-up, Judge's Choice or Winner's response.

8. RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION:

All Entrants assume any and all liability for any injury or damage caused, or claimed to be caused, by entering, participating in the Competition and release, discharge and hold harmless the Organizer, its members of council, officers, directors, employees, agents, representatives, successors and assigns and all others associated with the administration, development and execution of the Competition ("Released Parties") from and against any and all manner of action, cause of action, claim or demand, loss or injury, use or misuse of the Prizes, suit, debt, covenant, contract, including legal fees and expenses, whatsoever, including but not limited to, claims based on negligence, breach of contract and fundamental breach, failure of any third party contractor or supplier used in connection with any aspect of the Competition to perform or deliver any goods or services, any act of God or any other event beyond the Released Parties' control, any dissatisfaction of any kind by an Entrant with any aspect of the Competition or the Prizes, liability for physical injury, death, or property damage which the Entrants, their heirs, successors or assigns have, might have or could have suffered, by reason of or arising out of their participation in the Competition.

All Entrants indemnify the Released Parties against any loss, damage, or expense, including legal fees that any of the Released Parties may suffer or incur as a result of any non-compliance by an Entrant with any of the Competition Rules or participation in the Competition.

By entering and participating in this Competition, each Entrant warrants that their application and each Mentee warrants that their pitch is original and does not infringe any third-party intellectual property and agrees to license, for the purposes of the Competition only, intellectual property rights in any application or pitch to the Organizer, including, but not limited to, copyright and all economic rights, and to waive their moral rights respect of the use of the license, with no compensation or further consent required.

The Runners-up and Winner must provide proof of identification and sign a Declaration of Prize Eligibility and Liability/Publicity Release form (the "Declaration") to: confirm compliance with the Competition Rules; agree to accept the Prizes as awarded; and release, discharge and hold harmless the "Released Parties". The signed Declaration

must be returned to the Organizer by e-mail within five business days after it is sent to the Runners-up and Winner.

The Organizer is not responsible for: incorrect or inaccurate application information which may affect an individual's ability to participate in the Competition or be awarded the Prizes, including but not limited to human error, technical malfunctions, lost or delayed applications for any reason, omission, or any combination thereof, and applications which fail to fully comply with these Competition Rules; technical failures of any kind at any time, including but not limited to, malfunctions, interruptions, or disconnections in phone lines or network hardware or software; lost, incomplete, delayed, mutilated or misdirected applications or Declarations; injury or damage to an Entrant's computer or to any other individual's computer related to or resulting from participating in, or downloading any material regarding the Competition or being awarded the Prizes; any injury or damage to persons or property which may be caused, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, from an Entrant's participation in the Competition or receipt or use or misuse of the Prizes; the security or privacy of information transmitted via computer networks or for breaches of privacy due to interference by third party computer "hackers" or otherwise; late, lost, misdirected or unsuccessful efforts to notify a Runner-up or Winner; or any part of the Prizes that cannot be awarded due to acts of God, acts of war, natural disasters, weather, acts of terrorism or other factors beyond the Released Parties' control.

9. CONDUCT:

The Organizer reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify any Entrant if they are found to be: violating these Competition Rules; tampering or attempting to tamper with the application process or the operation of the Competition; acting in an un-sportsperson-like or disruptive manner, or with the intent to annoy, abuse, threaten or harass any other person.

Any attempt by an Entrant or any other individual to undermine the legitimate operation of the Competition may be a violation of criminal and/or civil laws. Should any such attempt be made, the Organizer reserves the right to seek remedies and damages to the fullest extent permitted by law.

10. OTHER CONDITIONS:

Termination or Amendment of the Competition:

The Organizer reserves the right to terminate or amend this Competition at any time

and in any way, without prior notice. Without limiting the foregoing, if for any reason, the Competition is not capable of running as originally planned, such as tampering, the Organizer reserves the right to cancel the Competition.

Publicity:

All Mentees agree to permit the Organizer or its designate to interview the Mentee, and if selected, the Runner-up or the Winner. Further, the Mentee agrees to be photographed, filmed and recorded, and agrees to permit the Organizer to use in any media throughout the world in perpetuity, their name, Prize won, biographic information, likeness, photograph, voice, audio or video recording and/or any statements made by them regarding the Competition for purposes of publicity or promotion without notice or additional compensation, notification or permission, except where prohibited by law. All Mentees, whether or not they are chosen as the Runners-up or Winner agree to sign a publicity release confirming such consent prior to participating in the Competition.

Law:

The Competition is void where prohibited by law and is subject to all applicable Canadian federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, and local laws. The Competition and these Competition Rules shall be governed exclusively by the laws of the province of Ontario and the federal laws of Canada applicable in Ontario, and any dispute shall be adjudicated by the courts sitting in Toronto, Ontario.

Intellectual Property of the Organizer:

All intellectual property of the Organizer, including but not limited to trademarks, logos, designs, promotional materials, web pages, source codes, images, drawings, illustrations, slogans, and representations are owned by the Organizer. All rights are reserved. Unauthorized copying or use of any copyrighted material or other intellectual property without the express written consent of the Organizer is strictly prohibited.

No Purchase:

No purchase of any kind is necessary to enter or win and making a purchase will not increase your chances of winning.

Privacy and Notice of Collection:

Environment and Climate collects personal information on this form under the legal authority of Item 2021.IE26.16, City Council Decision 5 a, b, c, as confirmed by the City of Toronto By-law 1110-2021. The information will be used to administer the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program and for further communication. Questions about this collection can be directed to the Senior Project Manager, Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program, Metro Hall, C/O Union Station East Wing 2nd floor, 55 John Street. Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3C6 or by telephone at 416-397-1753